

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1311

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Agriculture & Rural Economic Development, March 15, 2007

Title: An act relating to the small farm direct marketing assistance program.

Brief Description: Continuing the small farm direct marketing assistance program.

Sponsors: Representatives Grant, Hailey, McCoy, McDonald, Newhouse, Chase, Dickerson, Haler, Kenney, Springer and Morrell; by request of Department of Agriculture.

Brief History: Passed House: 3/06/07, 89-0.

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 3/15/07 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Rasmussen, Chair; Hatfield, Vice Chair; Schoesler, Ranking Minority Member; Morton and Shin.

Staff: Sam Thompson (786-7413)

Background: In 2001, the Legislature established the small farm and direct marketing program within the state Department of Agriculture. The program assists small farms, defined as having less than \$250,000 gross annual sales with labor and management provided by the farmer or farm family that owns or leases the farm, in direct marketing of agricultural products. Assistance has included grants awarded to local direct marketing projects, including farmers markets. The program expires July 1, 2007.

Summary of Bill: The July 1, 2007, expiration date for the state small farm and direct marketing program is deleted, thus extending the program indefinitely.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This very helpful program, which assists small farms with marketing opportunities, deserves continued support. Small farms constitute the great majority of all Washington farms.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Jim Armstrong, Spokane County Conservation District; Mary Beth Lang, Department of Agriculture; Jules Riske, Tilth Producers of Washington, Sedro-Woolley Farmers Market, Washington State Farmers Market Association.